

Reading Connection

INTERMEDIATE EDITION

Working Together for Learning Success

November 2016

Bennet Academy
Joseph Chella, Principal

Book Picks

■ *The Misadventures of Max Crumbly: Locker Hero* (Rachel Renée Russell)

If middle schooler Max Crumbly had superpowers, the school bully wouldn't stuff him into lockers, he wouldn't miss the bus, and he'd never feel anxious. But when Max uncovers a plot to steal the school's computers, he gets a chance to really be a hero!

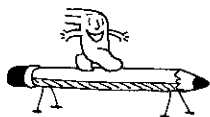
■ *This is Washington, D.C.* (Miroslav Sasek)

Introduce your child to landmarks and the history of the nation's capital with this travel guide for kids. Explore monuments, museums, and parks, including the Lincoln Memorial, the White House, and the National Air and Space Museum. Part of the "This is" series.

■ *The Key to Extraordinary* (Natalie Lloyd)

In Blackbird Hollow, 12-year-old Emma discovers through a dream that she was meant to find a mysterious treasure and stop a developer from destroying her home. Will she get to the treasure in time?

■ *Mad About Monkeys* (Owen Davey)
This illustration-packed book is filled with information about monkeys—their habitats, what they eat, and how they play. Learn about funny facts, such as which monkey wins for "best facial hair," and about serious topics like the threats posed by deforestation. (Also available in Spanish.)



Dive in to read deeply!

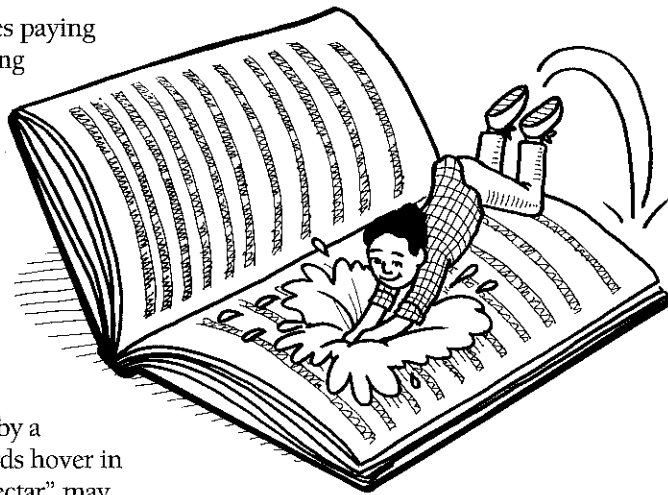
"Deep reading" includes paying attention to details, noticing characters' motivations, and making connections with what you read. Your child can dig beneath the surface with these suggestions.

Find the "big idea"

Small details often add up to a bigger theme. On the surface, sentences like "It's no fun to get sprayed by a skunk" and "Hummingbirds hover in midair while they drink nectar" may seem unrelated. But encourage your youngster to look for a link. He might realize, "Skunks spray to protect themselves, and hummingbirds hover to reach their food—this article is about animal survival."

Uncover the motive

One way to dig deeper is to consider a character's or an author's purpose. For example, why does Willy Wonka hold a contest in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (Roald Dahl)? (He needs to find out who he can trust to take over his



factory.) Or maybe a movie critic wants to convince people to see a film. What clues can your child find in the review that point to the writer's motivation? ("Don't miss this gem!")

Dare to compare

Making comparisons to his own life helps your youngster analyze reading material. If he reads a textbook chapter about the Dust Bowl, he could compare it to a natural disaster that happened in his lifetime. How did each disaster affect people and the environment?

Question of the week

What's the best sport to play on the moon? Use questions like that to encourage your child to write about her opinions and defend her answers.

Family members could take turns posting an open-ended question each week. Then, everyone writes a response and an explanation. For example, your youngster might write, "Gymnastics is a great sport for the moon because you could do lots of flips and go really high. It would be better than a game with a ball, because a ball would float away."

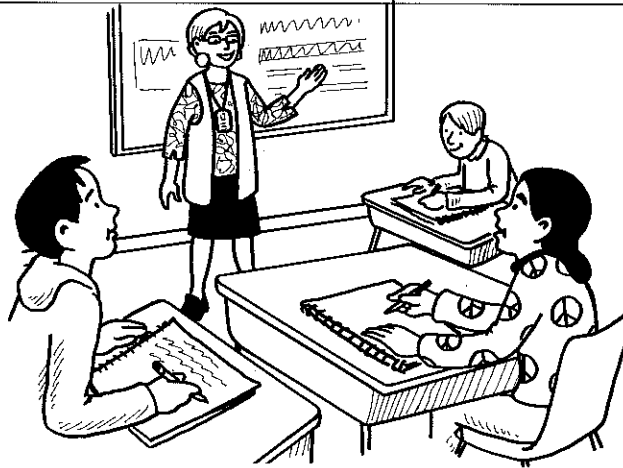
Put the responses in a box. At the end of the week, let your child read them aloud. You'll have fun discussing them over dinner!



Note-taking tips

Your youngster's notes are one of the best study tools she can use. Show her these strategies for writing down and keeping track of what she needs to know for tests and quizzes.

Be organized. Encourage your child to use a separate notebook or folder for each subject. She should write the date and the topic at the top of each page of notes so that later, she can easily find what she's looking for.



Zoom in. When her teacher talks, suggest that your youngster focus on clues that indicate she should write something down—such as when the teacher spells a person's name or repeats a date.

Abbreviate. Have your child think of

ways to shorten words she writes frequently. She might use "f'ex" instead of "for example" or "b/c" for "because."

Add symbols. Your youngster could put a question mark beside anything that confuses her as a reminder to ask the teacher about it. Or she may add a star to indicate something that's really important. ■



Word puzzles @ play

Get your child thinking about language in a fun and playful way by solving word puzzles together. Here's one to get you started:

What's ^{MAN}BOARD? (It's "man overboard!")

See how many of these 10 puzzles you and your youngster can figure out. (The answers are below.) Then, try your hands at creating new ones for each other to guess.

1. KCAP
2. ThePIEface
3. Read the print
4. Little little late late
5. +verb
6. Hijklmno
7. Somewhere
the Rainbow
8. |Read|
9. NOONgood
10. e
k
a
w



Answers:

1. Backpack
2. Pie in the face
3. Read the fine print
4. Too little, too late
5. Adverb
6. Water (H₂O)
7. Somewhere Over the Rainbow
8. Read between the lines
9. Good afternoon
10. Wake up

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's reading, writing, and language skills.

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Prepare for conferences

Last year at my parent-teacher conference, the teacher asked if I had questions about my son's reading progress. I couldn't think of any off the top of my head, but at home later, I came up with several I wished I had asked.

This year, I'm going to the conference more prepared. So far, I've listed questions about which reading group Anthony is in and whether he participates in discussions about books. I'm also going to ask if the teacher has recommendations for books that he can read at home.

Having a list makes me feel more confident about the conference, and I'm sure I'll walk away with information about how Anthony is doing with reading and how I can help him succeed. ■



Get the picture (book)

My daughter recently brought home a picture book from the school library. Aren't these too easy for children her age?

It might surprise you to learn that some picture books are written especially for older readers. They use sophisticated language and illustrations and sometimes address more mature or complex themes. For instance, *Fly Away Home* (Eve Bunting) deals with homelessness, and *Most Loved in All the World* (Tonya Cherie Hegamin) tells a story about slavery.

Ask your daughter what she likes about picture books. Maybe they remind her of when she was younger, or she likes being able to read an entire book in a single sitting. Or perhaps she uses them to understand science or history concepts—they're great for explaining complicated ideas.

Then, the next time you're at the library together, explore the picture book section and take home a few to read together. You may discover stories that draw you in, too! ■

